

Knowing of your interest in foreign affairs, I wanted to discuss the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Sudan's western region, Darfur. On March 4, the International Criminal Court (ICC) indicted Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Bashir responded by ordering the removal of thirteen nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and terminating the activities of three Sudanese humanitarian agencies. It is estimated that over one million people will stop receiving food distributions, water supply, and health services because of these expulsions. While remaining NGOs will try to fill the humanitarian gap in the short term, the Sudanese government has announced that they too must leave within one year, leaving millions vulnerable to hunger and disease in the near future.

By way of additional background, the Sudanese government has perpetuated genocide in Darfur since 2003 by unleashing Arab militias to go to war against African rebels in the region. An estimated 450,000 people have been killed and over 2.7 million displaced. While neither party has clean hands, it is a sad reality that the vast majority of the victims have been innocent civilians, including women and children, making it one of the worst human tragedies in recent generations. As a member of the Sudan Caucus and the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, I am deeply troubled by the genocide in Darfur and have supported multiple actions taken by our nation over the past several years to pressure the Sudanese government to bring this tragedy to an end. Unlike the United States, however, the international community has failed to take the meaningful steps that are necessary to stop the genocide.

In particular, China has not sufficiently used its close economic ties with Sudan to leverage pressure on Bashir to stop the tragedy. In a disturbing recent action, China blocked a firm statement from the United Nations that called on Bashir to reinstate the expelled humanitarian groups. The Arab League and African Union also opposed the U.N. declaration. In light of these actions, I have joined many of my fellow House members in urging [China](#), the [Arab League](#),

and the

[African Union](#)

to pressure the Sudanese government to reinstate these NGOs, because the ICC's actions should not affect humanitarian efforts in Sudan. This tragedy will almost surely continue so long as the international community continues to send mixed messages to Sudan. Sadly, the lives of many more innocent people in Darfur are at stake because of the looming humanitarian catastrophe and the ongoing failure of the international community to speak with one voice.